



# *Park Beach Surf Life Saving Club*

a history







Back - John Skinner, Matthew Foster, Dennis Patterson, Geoff Moffat, Maurice Clarkson, Brian Foley  
 Middle - Chris Guesdon, Chris Smith, Gil Oakes, Chris Mather,  
 Chris Woodward, Thomas Keenan,  
 Front - Peter Lanzlinger, Eoin McDonald, Denis Cole, John Bingley, John McClae, unknown,  
 Sitting - Selwyn Burrows, Michael Hawker





# A History of the Park Beach Surf Life Saving Club Tasmania 1959 to 1975

by Gil Oakes 2015

Copies lodged with the Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office, Surf Life Saving Tasmania and Carlton Park Surf Lifesaving Club. Supporting documents and photographs lodged with the Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office. In 2015 there is a web page <http://parkbeachslsc.com/> titled 'Welcome to Park Beach SLSC 1960-1975'. It covers a wide range of historical material.







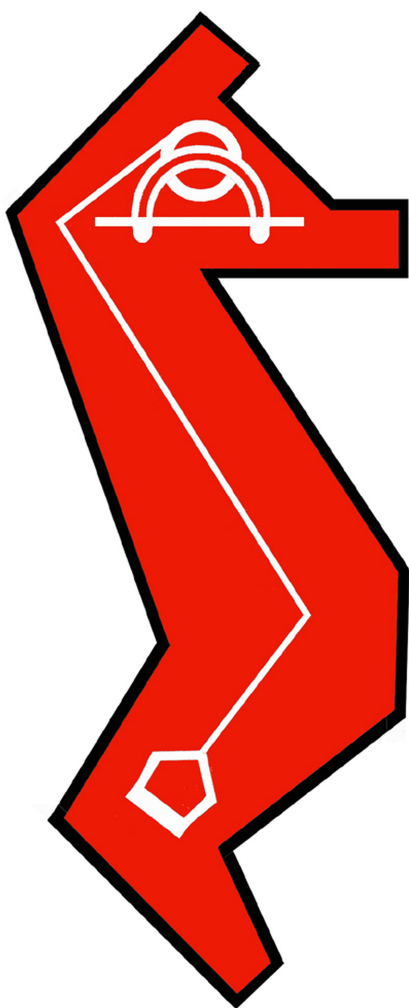
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# A History of Park Beach Surf Lifesaving Club

## Introduction

The author Gil Oakes <sup>1</sup> was a member of Park Beach SLSC from 1961, when he was 18 years old, until 1974. He saw Park Beach Surf Life Saving Club develop from having no clubhouse and hiding its patrol equipment behind the large rock at the entrance to the clubhouse grounds until it became a well developed club with facilities adequate for the era.

He was an active member and competitor and held executive positions during those years.

Writing this history in 2015 he describes the club's fortunes from its beginnings in 1959 until the amalgamation with Hobart Carlton SLSC and the formation of Carlton Park SLSC on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1975.

Park Beach is a spectacular location and the 200 or more members devoted thousands of voluntary patrol hours keeping the busy surf swimming beach safe. Many members were larger than life. Young men grew and developed physically, emotionally and socially as they trained, qualified, patrolled and competed as surf lifesavers. They accepted the responsibilities of managing the club.

The club struggled to meet many challenges. At times the views of the community were favourable and support was good. There were occasional tensions when the young members stretched the boundaries of the mid 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

This account has been hampered by the loss of many records of the club. Perhaps those who managed the amalgamation were too preoccupied with that task to preserve much of the earlier written history. A few of the Park Beach members have reminisced about their time at the club, half a century earlier. If their accounts lack detail it is perhaps because the memory can be selective. The ability to remember the good and forget the bad may have come to the fore.

Some have been asked to contribute but were too preoccupied with today to turn their mind back so far. However most of those who were approached gave generously of their personal records, memorabilia and reminiscences.

There is an element of sentimentality in this history. It may lack the minute details of who, what, where, how, why and when. However these things were never central to the philosophy of Park Beach SLSC. It was more to do with friendships, rivalries, personalities and surf life saving. This history celebrates the "salad days" of many fine young men.

The author joined Park Beach SLSC at the same time as Jeff Morley who is mentioned in this history. Jeff had a long and distinguished career in surf lifesaving in several states. His is the last word in this tale. Not due to a lack of worthiness but rather because his 'Ode to a Surf Lifesaver' is a wonderful glimpse of the human side of Park Beach SLSC and this great movement.

## The Place

A long, wide, sandy crescent beach meets rocky Spectacle Head. Here the surf rolls into a corner which is sheltered from the winds that can sweep across Frederick Henry

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<sup>1</sup> James Gilbert (Gil) Oakes born 1943 in Hobart.



Bay from the west and north-west. In summer the north westerly is a warm wind. If the swell is strong the waves break to the right of the rocks and roll to the east in warm sunny conditions. Cicadas sing in the heat among the wattles and she-oaks in the sand dunes. Wattle birds squawk. Sometimes three lines of breakers extend along the crescent beach to the river mouth and the bluff three kilometres eastwards. Low tide reveals a wide, clean and gently sloping beach.

In 1969 the patrol logs reported summer water temperatures between 15 and 20 degrees C.

Often though, the wind is cool and from the southern quarter chopping the swell into a mash of white foam and short waves. A strong swell may be present but it is un-surfable. Its time for a warm jacket.

There was sea and bird life aplenty in the waters around Spectacle Head. Crayfish and scale fish could be caught and in the summer shearwaters burrowed and fished. They were hunted as a food delicacy which required an acquired taste and deft cooking. . Frederick Henry Bay was a renowned fishing area for commercial and private fishers.

Two kilometres south west in Frederick Henry Bay is Whale Rock. Long used as a navigational marker it provided other benefits for surfers at Park Beach. It was a good training distance for surf boats and skis, Many a time those paddlers and oarsmen took the chance to drop a fishing line nearby. Surfers at Park Beach used the Rock to give warning of a big wave which would shortly arrive at the beach.

Another feature of the corner of the beach is the sandstone cliffs – not the volcanic rock of the headland but smoothly moulded faces. The same yellow sandstone which exists on the nearby Spectacle islands.

A feature of Park Beach is the amount of shells and shell grit. Not simply the random gathering of shells by the motion of the sea but somehow always visible in heaps on the beach and in layers in the sand dunes. They are also in the soil layers on headland. Why so many shells in one place? Could it be that aboriginal peoples over aeons of time also enjoyed the bounty of the sea at this place?

## The first surfers

In the late 1940s two brothers from a holiday cottage at Dodges Ferry trekked through the bush to the middle of the beach with heavy hollow plywood surf boards to explore the art of surfing. There was a farm road leading from Dodges Ferry to Spectacle Head and beyond but access to the beach was difficult with a warning that the corner was snake infested. A moulded and shaped marine plywood sheet also formed a belly board for surfing. It was a holiday adventure in an isolated farming area with few holiday cottages.

One of those boys was Rex Wright who developed a long standing affinity for the place because, by the late in the 1950s, he was inspired to devote a huge amount of time and effort in establishing the Park Beach surf lifesaving club in the western corner of the beach. These exertions eventually took a heavy toll on his personal life.

Where did the name Park Beach come from? No certainty about this but in the 1950s the real estate was developing in the area and the names "Blue Lagoon" and "Bally Park" were used for the nearby subdivisions. Perhaps they went back to the names of the farms. Somehow the name Park Beach may have evolved from these. There was a popular musical film of the time "South Pacific" and it may have inspired the names for this delightful holiday area.



Rex Wright



## The Era – the swinging sixties

To understand Park Beach SLSC it is necessary to place events in the context of the time.

There were a number of fortunate coincidences which combined to facilitate the formation of the club. There was a newly established surf lifesaving club at the river end of the same beach, Carlton Beach. The newly established Hobart Carlton Surf Lifesaving Club provided seeding capital, not financial in nature but in guidance and gear. Certainly the recent Australian Surf Life Saving Championships at Carlton Beach gave prominence to a little known sport in the Hobart area. It was estimated that 20,000 people attended so the ripple effect through the region stimulated interest in surf lifesaving clubs and in the sport.

Perhaps partly due to this the Carlton, Park Beach, Dodges Ferry and Lewisham area was booming as a holiday area. People built a 'shack' and came to the area for weekends and holidays. Generally not elaborate buildings but they served a purpose. People could now get involved with surfing.

One member of a shack family said that their building was roughly built but at least the cracks in the walls and floors allowed the sand to be easily swept out.

In the early 1960s there was an international surge in 'surfing music' and films. It was guitar music for dancing and the teenage kids and their radio stations went wild. They went to dances to socialise and to the cinema to see colour films of the experts riding the biggest waves. To be a youngster into surfing in those days was really "cool".

Recruiting members was easy, they were keen to get involved.

However the media was very different then.

News media in the 1960s functioned in a vastly different way to that of 50 years later. Telephones were fixed to a land line, there was one daily newspaper in Hobart which seemed to control most news and advertising, there were radio stations which had at last freed themselves from the lounge room mantelpiece and car dashboard by virtue of the 'transistor radio' a small portable radio which could be carried anywhere even when going surfing. Black and white TV was beginning and while lacking in immediacy could bring films of daily events.

Messages between people were sent by telephone or post or if urgent by telegram.

To communicate with its members the Park Beach Surf Club sent circulars by post. Getting through to the general public and to sponsors was another matter again. The club needed an economical way to achieve a public profile.

A member, Neil Coulston, worked at radio station 7HO and he conceived the idea of providing 'surf reports' each weekend morning. The reports were phoned by the club to the radio station and immediately broadcast. There were no other immediate weather reports or sea reports for the area so these provided a way for the public to know what the conditions were at the beach and to decide whether to come.

The resulting publicity for Park Beach was astounding. After earlier years of relative obscurity the name Park Beach became synonymous with surfing in the minds of many Hobart people. This was evidenced by record public attendance at a Park Beach surf carnival in 1964.

The economy provided jobs for all so that young members of the surf club invariably had full time jobs in Hobart as tradesmen, office workers or salesmen. Few worked shift work or at weekends. So Saturdays and Sundays brought most members to the beach.

## Club formation

Records show that Rex Wright conceived and developed the idea of the surf club. Rex, Marc Ashton, Arthur Griffiths and some local holiday home owners proposed the club to the Dodges Ferry Progress Association in February of 1959. The Tasmanian State Centre of SLSA granted affiliation in May that year, and Park Beach S.L.S.C. was born.

The estate of the late Mrs Newberry granted an area of land to the club in the dunes near the beach corner. A wooden hut was obtained from the construction site for the then new Hobart airport. It was dismantled and moved to Park Beach and re-erected on piers with the help of the local community. It gave the club the club a home.

Rex Wright said in a letter to the Tasmanian State Centre of SLSA in about 1960 "there seems so much to be done by so few with so little money, that we realise that we must proceed step by step until our final target has been reached. There appear to be no short cuts."

Conditions at the clubhouse were basic to say the least. There was a large bunk room for accommodation, a large common room, kitchen, gear room and boat shed. Members would travel to the club, sometimes hitch hiking, for weekends and spend the time training, surfing, patrolling and of course socialising. This interaction built lifelong friendships which meant that 40 and 50 years later sizeable reunions were held.

A significant aspect of the foundation of the club was the emergence of the seahorse emblem which has survived the club itself. It was recreated in 2010 by Peter Lanzlinger. It is thought that it was conceived by the first club secretary Iain Duguid or his family. Since the amalgamation in 1975 it has formed part of the badge of the Carlton Park Surf Lifesaving Club. Simple in concept, it took the outline of a seahorse with the traditional surf belt and reel forming the face and spine.

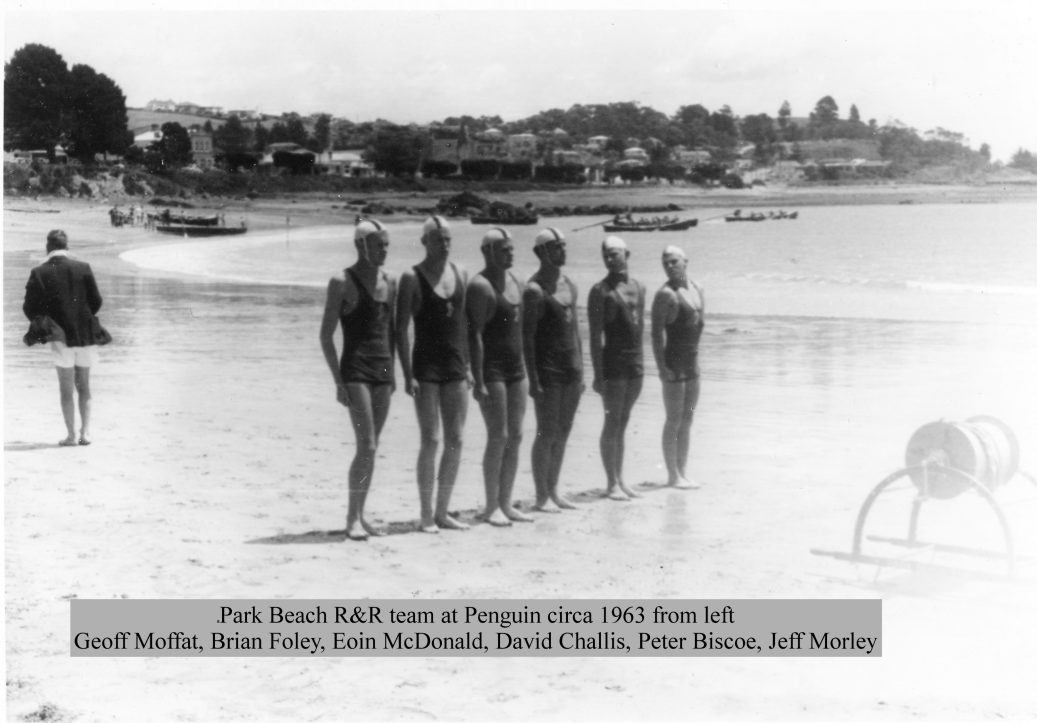
The new club took the colours of flamingo, black and white. The neighbouring club Hobart Carlton SLSC, whose colours were red and white, took exception to the flamingo. Described as an orange-red colour. They feared that it could be confused with their own red and white colours. This led to considerable discord. However when Park Beach gave prominence to white in its uniform and Hobart Carlton gave prominence to red there was no chance of confusion.

In 1960 Park Beach first competed at the State Titles Carnival at Penguin with six members.

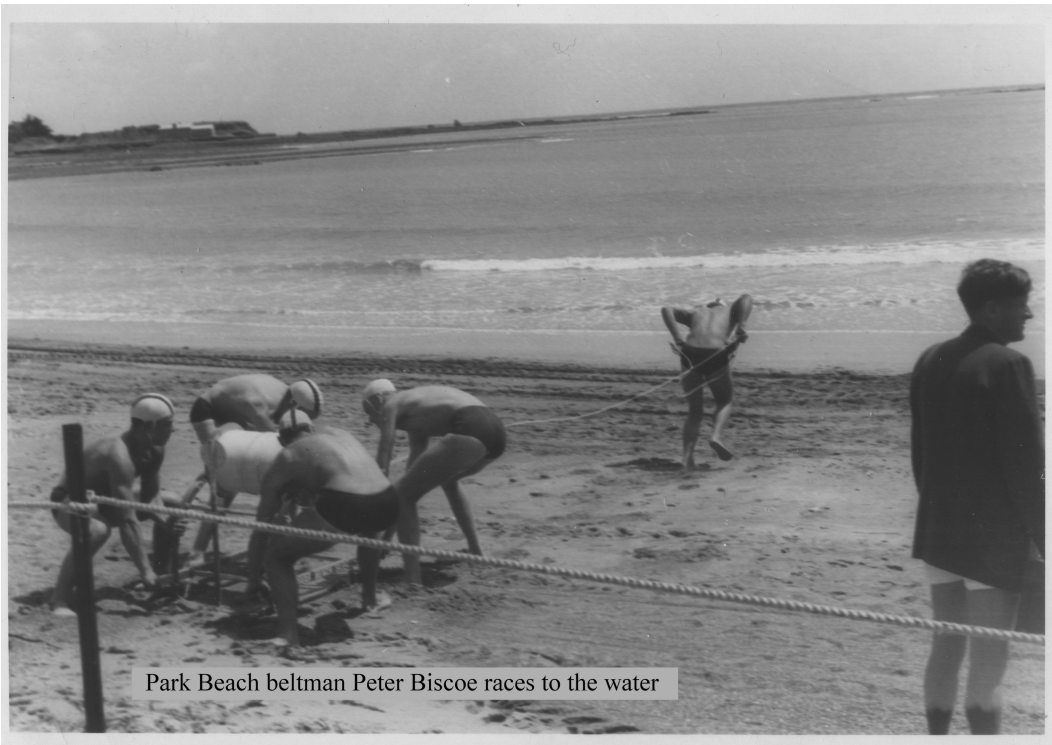
A significant aspect of surf lifesaving throughout Australia was that, for the first 73 years, women were not allowed to be active members. This is difficult to understand more than a century after surf lifesaving began in 1907. In 1980 women were admitted and today play a vital role in the movement. However, be it as it may, that was the situation when a new club like Park Beach affiliated in 1960. Those gender attitudes were general in Australian society of those times. It was Park Beach which raised the issue of women's march past teams a couple of years later at a State Centre meeting only to be jokingly dismissed. So it was that Park Beach, like every other surf lifesaving club of the time, had only male active members.

Another important difference from surf lifesaving in the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is the junior or nipper movement. In the 1960s boys of 12 years could join and were listed as cadet members. They were few but did participate in a limited way but not in the highly organised and effective way that children from 6 years do in the nippers today.

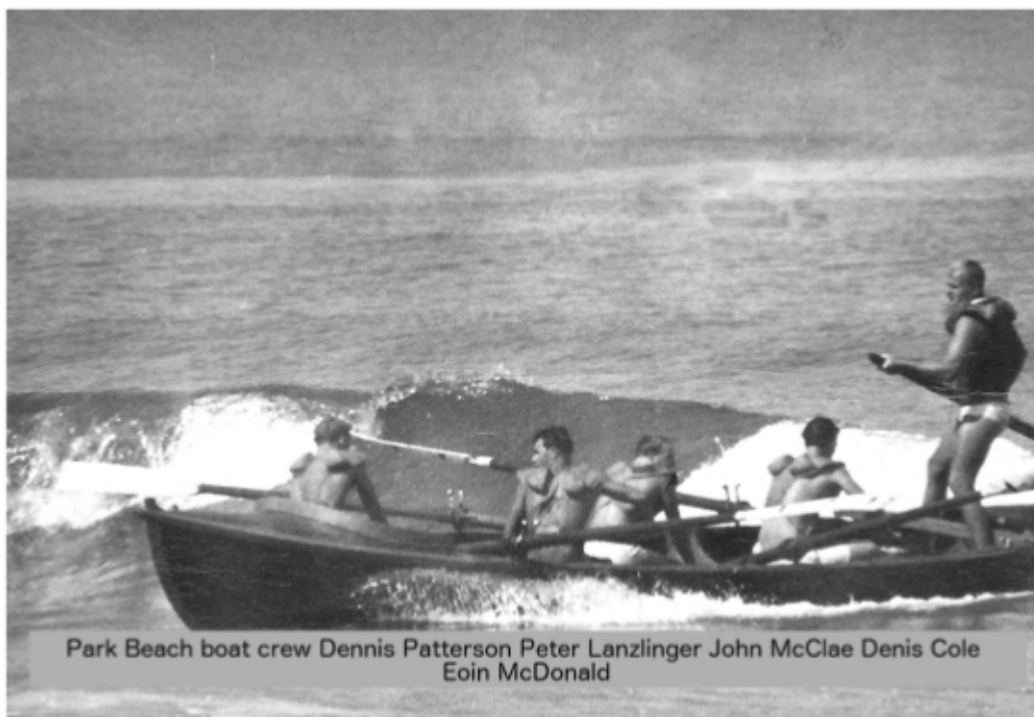




.Park Beach R&R team at Penguin circa 1963 from left  
Geoff Moffat, Brian Foley, Eoin McDonald, David Challis, Peter Biscoe, Jeff Morley



Park Beach beltman Peter Biscoe races to the water





## Annual report 1962-3

The Sea Horse emblem first appeared on the cover of the 1962-63 annual report. The Honorary Secretary was Geoff Moffat and the Club Captain Peter Biscoe.

Other officers were Marc Ashton President, Brian Foley Vice Captain, Eoin McDonald Chief Instructor, Tom Keenan Assistant Secretary, Tony Priest Clubhouse Director and committee members Arthur Griffiths, Tom Bates, Rex Wright and Ted Cruise.

Those who gained first placings at the State Championships at Low Head were Barry Smith in the Junior Surf Race and Junior Belt Race and also the Junior Surf Relay team of Barry Smith, David Challis, Michael Byrne and Jeff Morley.

Park Beach finished second overall.

During the year a patrol tower was erected.

Awards

Instructor's Certificate

Peter Biscoe

Bronze Medallion

Murray Bennett, John Bird, Selwyn Burrows, Michael Byrne, Michael Cardno, David Challis, Brian Champness, Maurice Clarkson, Denis Cole, Tony Cruise, Denis Franklin, Bill Griffiths, Tom Keenan, Geoff Kiernan, John McClae, Angus McCulloch, Michael Olsen, Dennis Patterson, Barry Smith, Chris Smith and Cliff Wright (requalified)

The work of Rex Wright was honoured with a special award for his services to the club.

The club's first new surf boat "Marc Ashton 1" was launched.

Demonstrations of resuscitation methods were given at schools and in the Cat and Fiddle Arcade in Hobart. These were aimed at introducing the expired-air method of resuscitation which had been recently introduced. It was a vastly improved method of resuscitation which all trained people could use.

Funds were raised by means of the annual Button Day and by the raffle of a block of land at Carlton. A complication was that the raffle came to the attention of authorities when the sponsor, a real-estate developer, was unable to specify the exact block which was being raffled. The club had to take some hurried action to establish its credibility after accusations that the land did not exist.

All ended well and the title for the block was eventually presented to the winner.

A well known Melbourne jazz band, the Red Onions, was hired for a long weekend in March 1963 through Cliff Wright who was a jazz musician. They played at Jazz Dances in Hobart on two nights, and at a giant barbecue at Park Beach the next night. It was a huge success and the club awoke on the Monday morning to the sounds of reveille played by the band's bugler from the patrol tower.

A national newspaper "The Truth" published a critical but inaccurate report on the dances describing alleged misbehaviour by the members of the club who it described as "surfies". This term was considered defamatory. Surf Lifesavers were considered to be "surfers". The club's honorary solicitor pursued the defamation action against the newspaper and damages were awarded. These were sufficient to purchase the surf boat Marc Ashton 1. This episode was a vivid illustration of the determined leadership of the club president Marc Ashton who was never one to shy away from a dispute. Marc was highly regarded by the majority of members over many years. His confrontational style of presidency did cause some resentment among other surf

lifesaving clubs who sometimes sneeringly referred to Park Beach SLSC as "Ashton's Circus". The latter was a touring circus of the day. Maybe another reason was that several other members of Park Beach SLSC were also colourful and larger than life characters.

## Annual report 1963-64

The President was Marc Ashton, Secretary Gil Oakes, Treasurer Rex Wright, Club Captain Brian Foley, Boat Captain and Chief Instructor Eoin McDonald, Management Committee Peter Biscoe, Chris Guesdon, Wayne Cannon, Tom Keenan and George Debnam.

Park Beach was second in the state wide patrol efficiency competition.

Instructors' certificates were awarded to Jeff Morley, Brian Foley and Dennis Patterson and bronze medallions to Richard Blundstone, Chris Woodward, Peter Lanzlinger, Chris Mather, Jeremy Oates, John Luttrell, Bruce Basstion, Damon Hawker, Neil Coulston and Terry Properjohn.

Peter Biscoe, Jeff Morley and David Challis were selected in the state team.

Park Beach competed in all state wide carnivals and in the annual carnivals between the two southern clubs.

A state wide carnival was held at Park beach on 12 January 1964 under almost ideal conditions with a crowd of 3000.

Fourteen members attended the Australian Championships held in heavy seas at Collaroy NSW in March. One member even had the chance to ride in the then new motorized surf boat.

Amongst the club gear was one moulded ply surfboat and two planked surfboats.

Membership	
Associate and country	14
Senior active	28
Junior active	6
Cadets and non active	25
Total	73

Funds were raised by annual membership subscriptions, a Surf Lifesaving Tasmania art union, a stall at the Hobart Regatta and cabarets at the Lewisham Hotel and Waratah Hotel.

The cabarets at the Lewisham Hotel were very social affairs with club members mixing with locals. It was a real country pub. Music was played on an old 'out of tune' piano. Meals were served from the kitchen. Supper consisted of party pies and cocktail sausages supplied at the bar by the Licensee Rex Oakley and family. Funds were raised by raffles, sports cards and a spinning chocolate wheel. Donated prizes included a canteen of cutlery, a permanent wave, cup saucer and plate, pottery vase and boxes of chocolates.

All events were successful but the stall at the regatta almost ended in disaster when it



The Mercury Monday 8 January 1968 Front Page

# RESCUERS PLUCK EIGHT PEOPLE FROM SEA

**EIGHT people were rescued by life-savers in southern and eastern Tasmania yesterday.**

Three men and three women were rescued at Park Beach, and a man and a youth were saved at Bicheno.

Josephine Goodluck, of Service St., and Julie Hamilton, of Little Arthur St., North Hobart, were caught in a rip at 2.45 p.m. off Park Beach. The rip took them 200 yards out into Frederick Henry Bay.

Three men and a woman found themselves in difficulty when trying to help.

Park Beach life-savers on patrol swam out to the six in difficulties and supported them until bellmen Jeff Morley, Leon King, and Colin Rose arrived.

Two of the swimmers were washed against the rocks before life-savers could reach them. However, they were quickly taken to safety.

## Club house treatment

The other four were taken back to the beach by the bellmen. The two teenage girls were treated at the club house for shock, cuts, and abrasions.

Garry Rush, one of the helpers, also was treated for cuts and abrasions.

The girls were carried to the club house on stretchers. They left the club house about an hour later.

They were both semi-conscious when taken from the surf.

Ian Raymond McDonald (15), of Paraka St., Burnie, and Darrel Hartam (42), of Lindisfarne, were rescued in separate mishaps off Red Bill Point.

They were attended by Swansea S.C. John Ambulance division and Dr. R. A. Goldfinch, of Swansea.

McDonald and Hartam are in the Swansea District Hospital in a satisfactory condition.

● **TOP:** Park Beach life-savers desperately wind in the reef as one of the two teenage girls rescued in yesterday's mishap, Josephine Goodluck, is towed in from the surf.

● **LEFT:** Three life-savers immediately hoist Josephine Goodluck from the water while another stands by with a resuscitator.

● **BOTTOM:** Two life-savers race along the beach with Josephine Goodluck on a stretcher.

**The Mercury**  
Established 1854

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## Beach drama





nearly collapsed due to two pools of rain water on the roof. The feature of the stall was a "dunking machine" devised by club member Bob Watson who was also an electrician. People paid to throw a ball at a target sending a lifesaver splashing into a tank of ice cold water several feet below. Roars of laughter followed.

The main social activities were the season opening barbecue, the annual end of season inter-patrol competition, the annual dinner, the winter football match against Hobart Carlton and the launch of the new surf boat "Sea Horse 1".

During the year the ladies auxiliary arranged delivery of 1000 used red bricks for the construction of a fireplace and chimney. It was later built by Mr John Edge a master bricklayer and the grandfather of Dennis Patterson.

Annual club awards	
Boatman of the year	Dennis Patterson
Senior Belt Champion	Peter Biscoe
Senior Surf Champion	Peter Biscoe
Recruit of the year	Chris Woodward
Patrol efficiency competition	No.5 patrol – Rex Wright (Captain), Denis Cole, Bruce Basstion, Peter Lanzlinger
Junior Belt Champion	David Challis
Junior Surf Champion	David Challis
Best all round competitor	Brian Foley
Best R&R man	Peter Biscoe

Being an all male weekend residential surf lifesaving club, a high standard of cleanliness of the living areas was important and tended to be an ongoing problem. Rules and duty rosters were established and generally standards were met.

One humorous incident was recorded during those times. It was Boxing day and members had celebrated the festive season in the club house. As was sometimes the case the tidiness of the place was not up to standard when the patrol inspector arrived.

What to do with the table which had the previous day been the centre of Christmas dinner?

While the inspector was visiting the beach patrol the off duty members solved the problem by whisking the table, with the remnants of Christmas dinner, out the door and into the bushes behind the clubhouse. It was important to have a tidy clubhouse as points would otherwise be deducted.

All was thought to be concealed. However someone let slip the secret and the inspector got wind of the deception.

## Rescues on rocks at Park Beach

In a front page story, with three action pictures, the Mercury newspaper reported on

Sunday January 7<sup>th</sup> 1968 that six people were rescued by lifesavers at Park Beach. The rip took them 200 yards out into Frederick Henry Bay. Two women were first washed out by the rip. Three men and a woman swam out to try to help but were also caught in the rip. Park Beach lifesavers on duty swam out to support the six in difficulties until beltmen Jeff Morley, Leon King and Colin Rose arrived. Two of the swimmers were washed against the rocks before lifesavers reached them. However they were quickly taken to safety. The other four were taken back to the beach by the beltmen. The two teenage girls were treated in the clubhouse for shock, cuts and abrasions. A man was also treated for cuts and abrasions. The girls were carried to the clubhouse on stretchers. They left about an hour later.

## Serious issues

### Conscription

From 1965 to 1972 young men of 20 years of age were required to enter a ballot for national military service based on birth dates. The compulsory training for many of those selected ultimately led to active military service in the Vietnam War and careers in the Army. This had a marked effect on the members of Surf Lifesaving Australia many of whom were in that age group. It caused a decline in active membership as these young men, already accustomed to discipline rose to this challenge.

It was a sacrifice willingly accepted for a war which was seen at the time as in the nation's interests. Park Beach members were inevitably involved.

### Conflicts with surf board riders

Park Beach, being such an ideal surf break in favourable conditions, was becoming a source of tension between the surf lifesaving club, on behalf of the general surfing public and surf board riders. The board riders used the face of a waves to sweep diagonally to the right as the waves built and broke. Whereas other beach users such as swimmers, surf floats, surf skis and surf boats follow the line of a wave as it runs into the beach. This led to dangerous situations as the fast moving boards with sharp fins crossed the path of swimmers, children and adults alike. The problem was not peculiar to Park Beach but was general to many Australian surf beaches.

Surf Lifesaving clubs responded by gaining local government support for by-laws which governed the situation. Surf boards were required to stay out of patrolled flagged swimming areas.

A by-law for Park Beach was enacted by the Sorell Council. The situation was very tense between surf lifesaving patrols and surf board riders at Park Beach. Board riders wanted the patrolled area to be moved further to the east but this would have caused many problems for other beach users. The whole appeal of Park Beach was its corner under Spectacle Head which sheltered it when the weather was warmest. Why, asked the surf lifesaving club, should other beach users be pushed out of the corner and into the wind by the board riders. Additionally the board riders were quite able to ride at the beach in the often windless early mornings before patrols started.

The area immediately surrounding Park Beach was vested some years before from the Mrs Newberry Estate. It was one of the achievements of Rex Wright and the founding committee of the club. It was on that land that the surf club house was built.

The tension between the opposing groups was demonstrated when the night security gate leading to this vested land and which led down to the beach from the road above was forced open by surf board riders. The surf board riders were concerned only with their own surfing pleasure and mostly showed no consideration for other wave users at







Park Beach. On the other hand the surf lifesaving club, with its traditions of vigilance and service, was concerned with the well being of the wider surfing public.

It was a conflict that continued for many years until the surf club was amalgamated to form Carlton Park SLSC at the other end of the beach. Park Beach is now primarily used by surf board riders which makes it is unsafe for others.

Ironically during the last 2 years of the life of Park Beach SLSC the pressure became too great and the swimming area was moved away from the sheltered corner of the beach. The result was the loss of the most sheltered part to swimmers and a loss of public support for the club and the beach.

Another aspect of the dispute was the loss of potential members for the surf club. Young people seemed to prefer to buy a surf board and chase waves rather than joining and accepting the responsibilities and discipline of a surf lifesaving club.

## Local Surf Carnivals

With the ever present problem of travel to state wide surf carnivals the southern clubs conducted local carnivals on a round robin basis. Initially the Pembroke trophy was contested annually at either Park Beach or Carlton Beach. It provided an expanded competition for southern clubs and was keenly contested. When Clifton Beach SLSC commenced it became a triangular contest known as the Plaister Shield which was named after well known Hobart swimming identity and Lord Mayor of Hobart Doug Plaister. The original Pembroke trophy was simultaneously contested. There were also social football matches conducted during the winter among these clubs. The seriousness of these encounters was not to be underestimated and on one occasion the Park Beach club was so disappointed with a loss that its members disappeared at the end of the game taking the unopened post match 5 gallon keg of beer with them.

## Surf Safari

In 1969 the southern clubs came up with the idea of a surf boat safari as a competition. Previously Park Beach had completed a lone marathon from Hobart to Park Beach via the Iron Pot which they did overnight in 12 hours. The crew was Eoin McDonald, Denis Cole, John McLea, Selwyn Burrows and Dennis Patterson. Cliff Wright ventured out on surf ski but fell short of the finish by only a few miles because he was harassed by dolphins.

Inspired by these achievements the surf safari was inaugurated in the 1969/70 season but with a reduced distance via the Ralphs Bay canal and lifting the craft across the road to Frederick Henry Bay. The finish was at the Lewisham Tavern. Forty five years later the event, although now confined to the Derwent River and with a shortened course, is still a fixture on the surf lifesaving calendar.

The concept of the surf boat marathon by Eoin McDonald and the Park Beach Club was one of its legacies to the surf lifesaving movement in Tasmania.

Another notable event of that time was in 1972 when two members ventured on an epic canoe voyage. The canoes were fibre glass construction and only able to carry one week's supplies. Cliff Wright and Colin Rose were both experienced adventurers and they trained for months in preparation for the voyage from Sydney to Hobart via the eastern Bass Strait islands. They paddled by day and camped by night for nearly 10 weeks from 8<sup>th</sup> March to 19<sup>th</sup> May 1972. They attracted national media attention and received a hero's welcome from a large crowd and from city and state officials when they arrived at Watermen's Dock in Hobart.

## Structure and traditions of Park Beach SLSC

There were many dedicated members who devoted much time to the club and its lifesaving, community, sporting and social activities.

Most members lived and worked in Hobart. During the week training activities were focussed on the city. Surf clubs shared the use of the pavilion at Long Beach Sandy Bay. Surf craft were stored there and training was done there.

Swimming training had two aspects. The competitive swimmers trained in squads in the swimming pools around the city. All members had to meet proficiency standards so that non competitive swimmers also had to do swimming training in the pool.

Boat crews did regular work on the river, in the gymnasium and running on the road.

Beach sprint competitors trained in running squads usually on grass ovals or a beach.

The management of the club was by the Management Committee which comprised club officials and elected members. Urgent business was handled by the Executive Committee and later ratified by the Management Committee.

There were sometimes special committees for fund-raising and the Ladies' Committee.

Club members attended occasional General Meetings and the Annual General Meeting at which officers were elected, the constitution could be amended the Club's annual report was tabled.

The social highlight of the year in May was the Annual Dinner and Presentation of Awards. It was often held at the Waratah hotel and was a formal occasion with appropriate dress in contrast to the usual beach wear on all other club occasions. There was Grace followed by a five course meal and formal toasts to the Queen and other levels of officialdom.

At the start of the season a printed patrol roster was issued. Members were allocated to a patrol and were required to attend four or five patrols during the season. Times were Saturday from 1pm to 5 pm and Sundays 10am to 5pm. There were usually about six or eight members on each patrol.

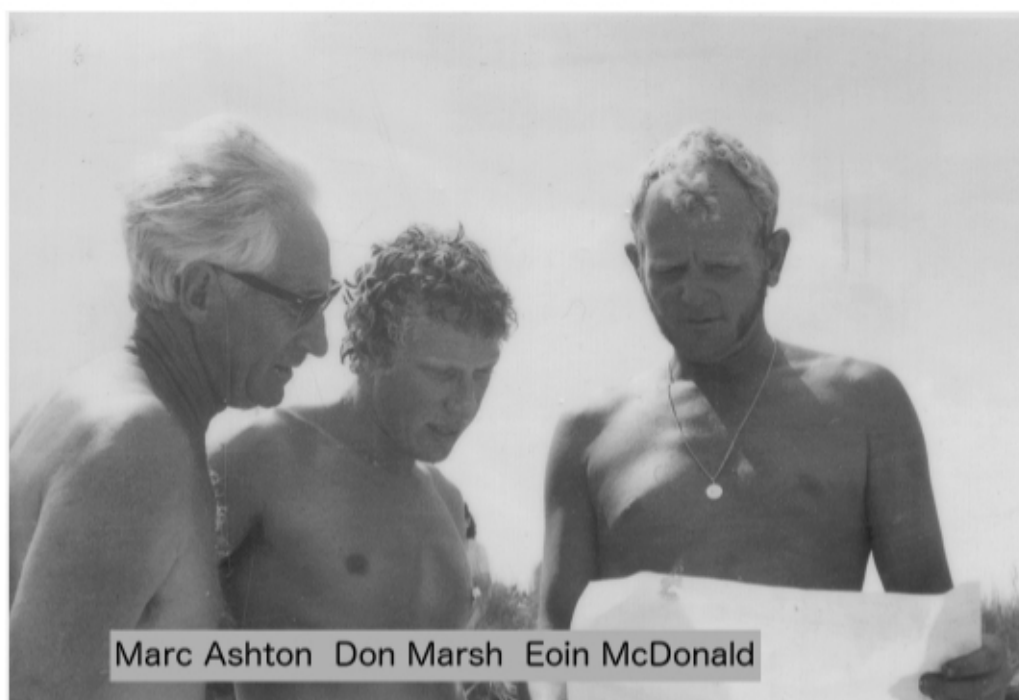
At the end of the season Captain's Day was held. The patrols competed against each other to celebrate the achievements of the year.

The club saw a responsibility to educate the public in the use of expired air artificial resuscitation and recovery methods as many water accidents occur in places where urgent trained assistance is not on hand. Demonstrations were conducted in shopping malls and schools to improve public awareness of this valued method of saving life. This also provided an opportunity to invite likely recruits to the club.

Being an affiliated surf lifesaving club, Park Beach sent delegates to the regular meetings of the Tasmanian State Centre where the business of the movement in Tasmania was conducted. Senior members could qualify and then join the Tasmanian Board of Examiners which had meetings to manage the technicalities of lifesaving, qualifications and competition in the state. The Tasmanian State Centre had no paid officers but an honorarium was paid to the State Secretary.

## Amalgamation

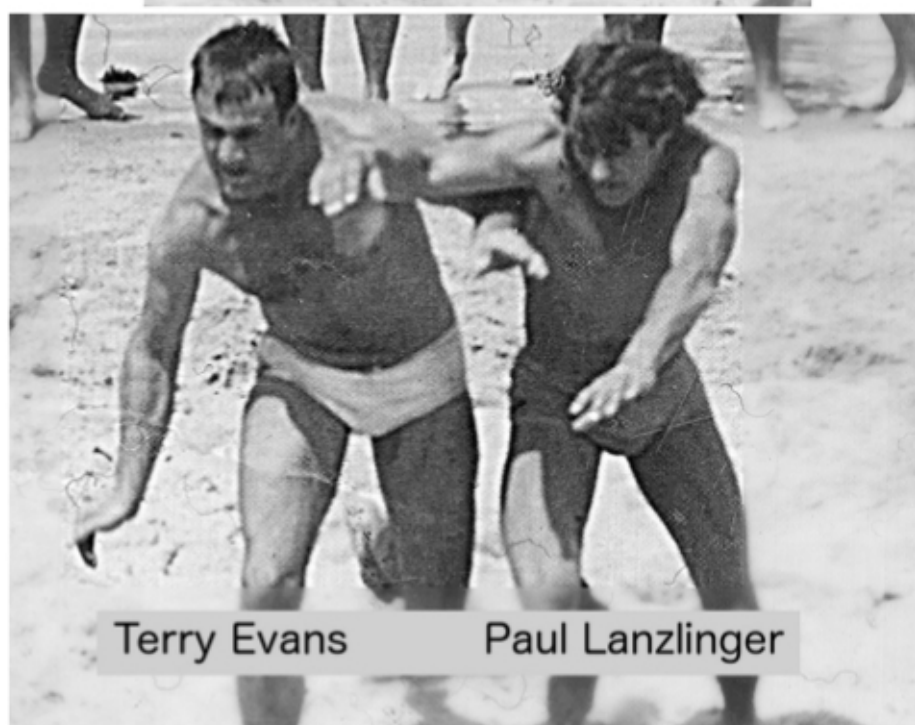
By 1974 the fortunes of the surf lifesaving clubs had changed as had the social fabric of the area. The greater Lewisham, Dodges Ferry, Park Beach and Carlton areas were becoming suburbanised. No longer were the surf clubs in isolated beach areas. Homes



Marc Ashton Don Marsh Eoin McDonald



Brian Dunkin Eoin McDonald Brian Foley Gil Oakes





were being built up to their boundaries. Park Beach in particular had a problem with its buildings. They were frankly unacceptable in the suburban environment. The clubhouse was an old wooden army hut with outdated facilities. Unfortunately endeavours to raise funds for a new club house were fruitless.

At the same time the neighbouring Hobart Carlton club had declined to a membership which was too small to carry out regular beach patrols. Park Beach had 40 members and could function but it lacked adequate infrastructure.

The amalgamation Committee Chairman was Chris Guesdon President of Park Beach and its members were Michael Bowerman, President of Hobart Carlton, Darrell Harrington, Secretary Park Beach, Paul Kenny, Hobart Carlton and Geoff Marsh Park Beach

The logical and correct step was to amalgamate the two to take full advantage of the best assets of each. The Park Beach clubhouse closed and the members, gear and equipment moved to the Hobart Carlton clubhouse at the other end of the beach.

The inaugural President of the new club was Eoin McDonald, a former office bearer and Club Captain of Park Beach.

Many regretted the move but others revelled in it. Exciting times were ahead in the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

The amalgamation allowed the upgrading of patrols and the pooling of resources. It offered the public an efficient rescue service and improved facilities for surf lifesavers. Gifts of a 4 wheel drive vehicle and a powered rescue craft enabled the club to patrol the whole length of the beach from Carlton River to Spectacle Head. Lifesavers, placed at strategic positions along the beach, were linked by two way radio to the patrol vehicle and the powered rescue craft. Radio links were possible with other emergency services.

And so it was that the Park Beach Surf Lifesaving Club became a parent of the Carlton Park Surf Lifesaving club.

Park Beach, in association with Hobart Carlton Surf Lifesaving Club, built the foundation for a new and exciting era for surf lifesaving in the Southern Beaches region. It must be acknowledged that the work of the small band of enthusiasts who formed the Park Beach Surf Lifesaving Club in 1959 and the many dedicated members who followed, bequeathed a handsome legacy of vigilance, service, competition, enthusiasm, determination, humour and the sheer enjoyment of life and surf lifesaving. They played an honourable part in the great Australian tradition of surf lifesaving.

## **Bronze medallions awarded to members of Park Beach SLSC**

### **1959-60**

Alan Bryce, Gary Woolford, Cliff Wright, Henry Bryce Phillip Edwards and Rex Wright.

### **1960/61**

Brian Foley, Graeme Williams, Matthew Foster, Paul Turnbull, John Bingley, Peter Cusick, Barry Wheelan, Brian Duncan and Peter Biscoe.

### **1961-62**

Jeff Morley, Tony Priest, Ian Mulholland, John Skinner, Phillip Capon, Chris Guesdon, Garry Gilmour, Gil Oakes, Edward Pool and Christopher Cruise.

**1962-63**

Chris Smith, Angus McCulloch, Denis Franklin, David Challis, Wayne Cannon, John Bird, Barry Smith, Denis Cole, Maurice Clarkson, Michael Byrne, Brian Champness, Dennis Patterson, John McLae, Selwyn Burrows, Geoffrey Kiernan, Thomas Keenan, Michael Olsen, Murray Bennett, Michael Cardno, Anthony Cruise, Bill Griffiths.

**1963-64**

Peter Lanzlinger, Christopher Woodward, Richard Blundstone, Terence Properjohn, Christopher Mather, Jeremy Oates, John Luttrell, Bruce Basstion, Damon Hawker, Neil Coulston.

**1964-65**

Andrew Black, John Bowden, Noel Sargent, Clement Walters, Anthony McDermott, Rodney Jones, Barry Dunkley, John d'Emden, Robert Cuttriss, Francis d'Emden, Graham McNaney, Kenneth Walsh, Garth Chisholm, Ian Smith, Kenneth Wright.

**1965-66**

Terence Ward, Hubertus Vermey, Anthony Adkins, William Clarkson.

**1966-67**

Geoffrey Cloudsdale, Gerald Hopwood, Gregory Forwood, Graham Rowe, Martin Brown, Dennis McLaughlin, Leigh Connors, Garry Bellette, John Davis, Stephen Jacobs, Glenndon Wigg, Keith Symons, Donald Marsh, Peter Willson, Robert Watson, Paul Lanzlinger.

**1967-68**

Edward Vervaart, Terrance Evans, Geoffrey Marsh, Rodney Williams, Geoffrey Clayton, Leon King, Michael Bingley, Roger McLennan, Bruce Barr, Steven Townsend, Steven Nus, Tadi Janus, Eric Buls

**1968-69**

Geoffrey McGibbon, Stephen Godfrey, Johnathan Bowling, Richard Campion, Robin Farrington, Paul Jacobs, John Wilson, Rodney Ridgers, Bolleks Zielinski, Stephen Foulkes, James Scarr, Neil McDonald, Ross Webster, Ronald Dawes, Roger Orbell, Larry Furminger, Andrew Lanzlinger, Craig Leatherbarrow, Timothy Farrington, Kenneth Bain, David Bain, Phillip Inglis, Richard Jones, Michael Watkins, Patrick Bowring, Gregory Gallagher, Michael Bourke, Peter Komarzynski.

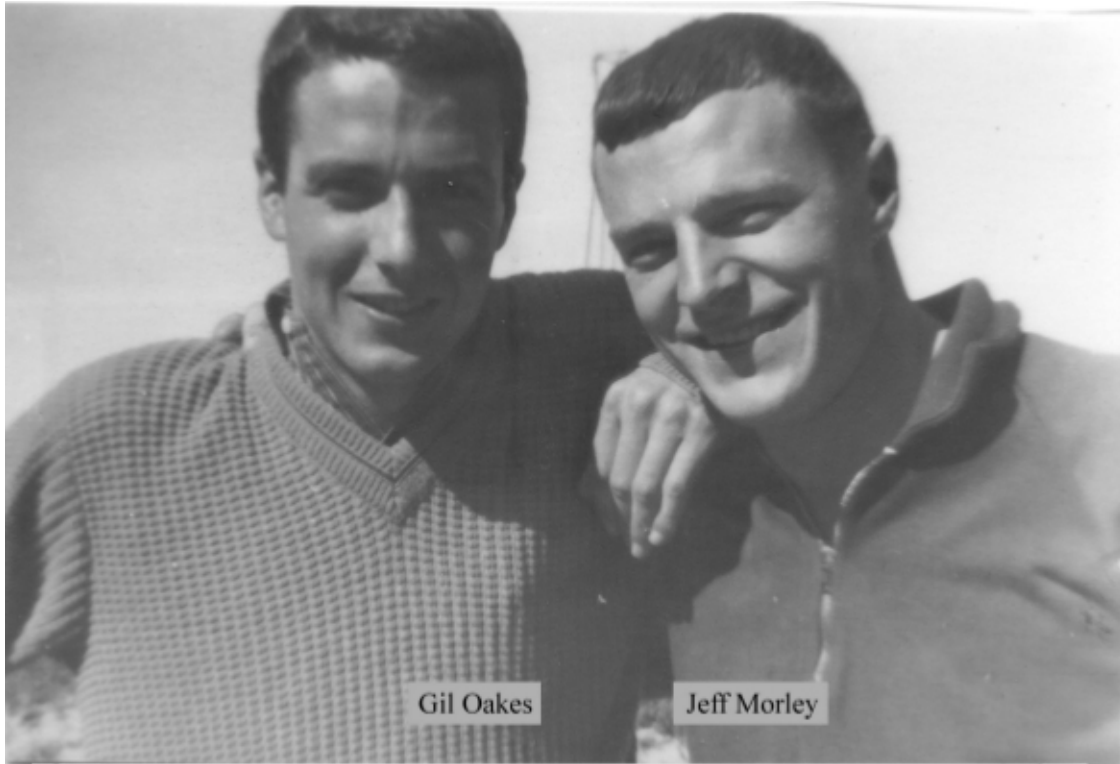
**1969-70**

Mark Leatherbarrow, Phillip Morgan, Ross Wilson, John Spaulding, Christopher Isles, Gregory Lugford, Jeffrey Ward, Ian Wigg, Michael McClymont.

**1970-71**

Garry Everingham, Anthony Wise, Simon Cracknell, Philip Kirkham, Donald Hallett, Tony Young, Mark Perriman, Steven Collis, Michael Viney, Roger Barr, Darrell Harrington, William Marsh, Robert Wright, Philip Sokolski, Patrick Taylor, Timothy Watkins, Ian Hallett.





Gil Oakes

Jeff Morley





**1971-72**

Paul Perriman, Ian Weston, Gary Koerbin, George Haremza, Gary Garlic, Nick Edhouse, Stephen Gamble, Brian Gleeson, David Wells, Gordon Ramsay.

**1972-73**

Lawrence Coad, Simon Roper, Phillip Garvey, John Burke, Noel Peters, Andrew Inglis, Neil Gleeson, Nigel Flakemore, Peter Fisher.

**1973-74**

Kerry Harrington, Peter Londesborough, Duncan Garvey, Michael Jarvis, Stephen Barber, Dennis Coleman.

**1974-75**

Lloyd Davis, Julian Hickey, Tony Sperring, Paul Koerbin.

## Officers Park Beach Surf Lifesaving Club

	President	Club Captain	Secretary
1959-60	M Ashton	R Wright	R Wright
1960-61	M. Ashton	R Wright	R Wright
1961-62	M Ashton	P Biscoe	I Duguid
1962-63	M Ashton	P Biscoe	G Moffat
1963-64	M Ashton	B Foley	G Oakes
1964-65	M Ashton	B Foley	G Oakes
1965-66	M Ashton	B Foley	J Luttrell
1966-67	M Ashton	B Foley	J Luttrell (resigned 25-11-66) E S McDonald
1967-68	M Ashton	G Oakes	E S McDonald
1968-69	M Ashton	G Oakes	E S McDonald
1969-70	M Ashton	E S McDonald	G Forwood
1970-71	M Ashton	E S McDonald	R Tanner
1971-72	A M Ashton (resigned 31-1-72) C D Wright	P G Lanzlinger	R Tanner
1972-73	H Everingham (resigned 7-11-72) C Guesdon	M Watkins	J Morley
1973 -74	C Guesdon	D Marsh	D Harrington

## **Park Beach members who went on to hold senior offices in Surf Lifesaving Tasmania.**

S Godfrey - State Secretary and Director of Administration and Resources 1989,1991,1995-96, Director 2010-11, President 2011-14

J Hickey – State Superintendent 1987, Director of Lifesaving 1991, Board of Lifesaving Chairperson 2001, Board of Lifesaving 2002-03, Chairman SLST 2004-05

D Marsh (joint) Director Competition and Coaching 1998-99, Director Planning and Marketing 1998,1999,2000, High Performance Selection Advisor 2008-2011, Director 2008-14.

G Marsh – Patrol Officer 2001

## Park Beach State Titles Placings

Park Beach State Titles placings			
Year	Event	Competitor	Placing
1971	Mens B Boat		2
1975	Mens B Boat		2
1971	Junior Mens Boat		2
1974	Junior Mens Boat		2
1973	Open Mens Surf Board	D Marsh	2
1975	Open Malibu board relay		3
1964	Open Mens Belt	J Morley	1
1969	Open Mens Belt	D Champion	3
1971	Open Mens Belt	D Marsh	2
1972	Open Mens Belt	S Godfrey	3
1973	Open Mens Belt	M Watkins	2
1973	Open Mens Belt	G Everingham	3
1974	Open Mens Belt	S Godfrey	3
1975	Open Mens Belt	S Godfrey	1
1963	Under 18 Mens Belt	S Smith	1
1964	Under 18 Mens Belt	D Challis	1
1967	Under 18 Mens Belt	S Jacobs	3
1969	Under 18 Mens Belt	G Marsh	2
1971	Under 18 Mens Belt	S Godfrey	2
	Under 18 Mens Belt	M Watkins	3
1972	Under 18 Mens Belt	G Everingham	2
	Under 18 Mens Belt	G Koerbin	3
1969	Open Mens Surf Race	D Marsh	1
1971	Open Mens Surf Race	D Marsh	2
1973	Open Mens Surf Race	D Marsh	1

Park Beach State Titles placings			
1974	Open Mens Surf Race	D Marsh	2
1975	Open Mens Surf Race	D Marsh	3
1961	Under 18 Mens Surf Race	P Biscoe	2
1962	Under 18 Mens Surf Race	B Dunkin	2
1963	Under 18 Mens Surf Race	B Smith	1
1968	Under 18 Mens Surf Race	D Marsh	1
	Under 18 Mens Surf Race	B Barr	3
1969	Under 18 Mens Surf Race	S Godfrey	2
1969	Under 18 Mens Surf Race	G Marsh	3
1968	Under 15-16 Mens surf race	R Sargent	3
1970	Under 18 Mens Surf Race	G Koerbin	1
1971	Under 18 Mens Surf Race	G Koerbin	3
1974	Under 18 Mens Surf Race	R Sargent, S Barber	
1967,1972	Open Mens surf teams		3
1971, 1974	Open Mens surf teams		2
1973	Open Mens surf teams		1
1961	Under 18 Surf Teams		2
1963	Under 18 Surf Teams		1
1974	Under 18 Surf Teams		1
1969, 1971	Open Surf Relay		2
1972	Open Surf Relay		3
1973,1974, 1975	Open Surf Relay		1
1967,1973, 1974	Junior Surf Relay		3
1970,1971, 1974	Cadet Surf Relay		1
1972	Cadet Surf Relay		3
1974	Under 18 Iron Man	T Watkins	1
1964,1965, 1966	Open Mens Beach Sprint	G Oakes	1



Park Beach State Titles placings			
1974	Open Mens Beach Sprint	D Harrington	3
1973	Mens Beach Flags	K Bain	3
1974	Mens Beach Flags	D Harrington	1
1974	Mens Beach Flags	K Harrington	3
1970	Mens Under 18 Beach Flags	P Inglis	1
1974	Mens Under 18 Beach Flags	S Rodman	1
1975	Mens Under 18 Beach Flags	S Rodman	1
1975	Mens Under 18 Beach Flags	P Koerbin	2
1971	Mens Under 15-16 Beach Flags	S Inglis	1
1974	Mens Under 15-16 Beach Flags	P Koerbin	1
1968	Open Mens Beach relay		3
1973, 1974, 1975	Open Mens Beach relay		2
1974	Junior Mens Beach Relay		1
1975	Junior Mens Beach Relay		2
1971	Cadet Mens Beach relay		1
1962	Open Pillow Fight	B Foley	3
1973	Open Pillow Fight	E McDonald	3
1969	Open Iron Man	G Marsh	2
1970, 1974, 1975	Open Iron Man	D Marsh	1
1971, 1973	Open Iron Man	D Marsh*	2
*Don Marsh is widely regarded as the Tasmania's greatest surf lifesaving competitor with a career which extends long beyond his days at Park Beach.			

## Reminiscences

In the teens of twenty first century, several former Park Beach members cast a backward glance and assembled a collage of events and people. Few though they are, they give an insight into the culture of the club and the atmosphere of the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. A lot of waves have risen and broken on Park Beach since then .

### **The early days of Park Beach Surf Lifesaving Club - reminiscences by Peter Biscoe, February 2015**

Park Beach Surf Life Saving Club was formed in 1959. I joined in 1960. I was the Club's second captain from 1961 to 1963 and remained a member until early 1968 when I left Tasmania. I have been asked by Gil Oakes to wind my mind back to my time as a member. As that was half a century ago and few Club records have survived, there are gaps and imperfections in my recollection, for which I hope I will be forgiven.

At the outset, I would like to acknowledge the sterling job that my contemporaries and friends Brian Dunkin and Gil Oakes have been doing for some years in creating and maintaining a Club website, recording the history of the Club, and preserving or reviving friendships forged between former members so long ago.

For those who wish to know more about me, this is my life in a nutshell. I attended St Virgil's College in Hobart, represented Tasmania in surf life saving and water polo, won some State swimming titles, and enjoyed rugby until injury put a stop to it (that knee now troubles me!). After graduating in law and working as a lawyer for a year in Hobart, I left Tasmania in early 1968 aged 24. The next six years were spent in London and the USA studying, working and writing a legal book. Thereafter I practised as a barrister in Sydney, married and had four children, was appointed a Queens Counsel, remarried, wrote another legal book, and was appointed a Judge in 2006.

After returning from overseas in 1974, I visited my parents in Hobart, and upon taking a nostalgic drive to Park Beach was shocked to find that the clubhouse was gone! I feared the worst: that the Club had folded. Later, I received the more cheerful news that the Club had recently amalgamated with our old rival Hobart Carlton SLSC at the other end of the beach, to become Carlton Park SLSC. I feel a tinge of sadness that the Club did not endure as a separate entity, but understand that amalgamation was a rational decision at the time.

My first contact with the Club was in the winter of 1960 when I was a final year student at St Virgil's. It came about when Cliff invited me to meet Rex over dinner at Rex's home. Rex was then about 30. He was a pleasant, personable, modest fellow who looked like he had been a footballer.

Cliff, among other things, was a good rugby player (for the Gordon club) and coach and an accomplished trad jazz musician who motivated several of us in the rugby teams to play instruments together and with him at jazz happenings. He lent me an old trombone that I played excruciatingly badly. In 1971 he became the Club president. It was good to see Cliff again at the Club's 50<sup>th</sup> reunion in 2010, entertaining us with music and song. Just like old times.

The point of my meeting with Rex was to encourage me to join the Club and, through me, to encourage other boys to do so. Rex's abalone dinner was memorable because I had not eaten abalone before: in those days it was nearly all exported to Japan or the USA (a few years later I spent a Uni vacation diving commercially, but with little profit, for abalone).

That evening Rex and Cliff did spark my interest in joining the fledgling Park Beach SLSC.

In the summer of 1960, which marked the end of our school days, Brian Dunkin and I camped for a couple of weeks beside a large rock behind the sand dunes at Park Beach (in a tent borrowed from 1<sup>st</sup> Lindisfarne Scouts of which we were members). At that time the beach, sand dunes and southern cliff were still in pristine condition. The following year an area behind the sand dunes was cleared for a clubhouse and vehicle access; today there is a public toilet block there and the southern cliff has a number of houses. In the 1960s Dodges Ferry and Lewisham were small villages; today they are quite suburban. Our camping holiday was a carefree surfing interlude. Every day the surf was up and the sun was hot; we became as brown as berries. Sometimes friendly local shack owners fed us. We struck up a friendship with Alison Germaine and another girl (whose name I cannot recall) whose families had shacks nearby; and thereafter they regularly barracked for the Club at surf carnivals.

Dunk went on to win the State junior belt and to represent the State in surf life saving, amateur football and water polo and in 1970 to win the Club's best all round competitor award. His initial career was in the Army making maps in remote parts of Australia and on active service in Borneo. Later, he worked in the Arabian and south-east Asian oilfields. Dunk now lives in Canada where he works as a technical writer gathering complex business and technical information and putting it into plain language. He returns regularly to Tassie. His literary flair is apparent in an historical novel that he has written based in Tasmania. In my opinion, it is worthy of publication.

The Club's first president and one of its founders was Marc Ashton, who had a shack at Park Beach (it is still there). He remained president until January 1972 when he suffered a vote of no confidence and resigned. Whatever the politics were that brought about this unhappy event, he deserves to be honoured for his presidency for most of the Club's life.

In the Club's first season, 1959-60, it had seven active members who gained the Bronze Medallion. They included Rex Wright, who was the Club's first captain and one of its founders, and his brother Cliff, who was my school rugby coach.

In 1960-61 - the Club's second season - I was one of nine boys, all from St Virgil's College except Brian Dunkin and Graeme Williams - who became the Club's second Bronze Medallion squad. The others were Brian ("Daffles") Foley (a future club captain and a good middle distance runner), Matt Foster (a good swimmer), Paul ("Pills") Turnbull (a good rugby player), John Bingley (another good rugby player), Barry Whelan and Peter Cusick.

In the Club's third season, 1961-62, ten more joined the Club and gained Bronze Medallions. They were Gil Oakes (a future Club secretary and captain, and a State champion beach sprinter), Ian ("Mo") Mulholland (a champion swimmer who later joined the Army and now lives in WA), Tony ("Birdie") Priest (with whom Dunk and I had been in 1<sup>st</sup> Lindisfarne Scouts), Jeff Morley (a good belt swimmer with an eccentric talent of walking along the beach on his hands), Chris Cruise (strong on the board and ski and a fine musician), Chris Guesdon (who became a champion marathon swimmer and administrator, and Club president in 1973-74), Garry Gilmour (older than most of us), John Skinner, Phillip Capon and Edward Pool.

In the Club's fourth season, 1962-63, the membership exploded with 21 new members gaining their Bronze medallions. They included two State champion swimmers, David Challis and Barry Smith, as well as Bill Griffiths (a law student with whom I had some diving adventures) and Dennis Cole (strong in the boat).

Despite my tender years, in 1961 I was thrust into the role of Club captain, succeeding Rex Wright, largely because the active members were nearly all of a similar age. Looking back, I have to say that I was immature for the role. I had the mistaken notion that a surf lifesaving club should be run along military lines. That might have been so

after World War II when membership around Australia largely comprised ex-servicemen, which may explain the existence of the march past competition at surf carnivals. But in the 1960s, the times they were a changin'. The 1960s were the start and zenith of anti-establishment hedonism fuelled by a sexual revolution (thanks to the discovery of the Pill) and growing opposition to the Vietnam war among many of the young. Despite the fact that the voting age and the drinking age then were 21, when men turned 20 we went into a birthday ballot to see who would be conscripted and likely sent off to fight in Vietnam. I do not recall anyone from Park Beach SLSC being conscripted, although a friend from another club was conscripted and suffered a gunshot wound. In the surf the freedom of just being a board rider was starting to lure young men away from surf life saving clubs. This probably contributed to the later entry of women into the surf life saving movement.

Brian ("Daffles") Foley, who succeeded me as Club captain, was in my class at St Virgils where he represented the school at middle distance running, swimming and hockey. He was a gentle soul, a smile always on his lips. He took a Science degree at Uni. In later years he had a lead role in the administration of Masters running internationally. The last time I saw him was at the Club's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary reunion in 2000. He had matured into a strong minded man. Along with many others, I was saddened by his sudden and untimely death a few years later.

Gil Oakes was Club secretary from 1963 to 1965, Club captain from 1967 to 1969 and State beach sprint champion from 1964 to 1966: he represented the State in that event in 1966 at Coolangatta. He was a tower of strength in Club administration in the early years. He took an Arts degree and had a lengthy career in the Tasmanian Public Service.

It was in or about 1962 that we had the good fortune to be joined by two experienced, older surf life savers from interstate: Eoin McDonald from Queensland and Geoff Moffat from NSW. Geoff was the Club secretary in 1962-63 and a member of the R & R team. He now lives in South Australia where he has been heavily involved in surf life saving for many years. Eoin soon became the Club's boat captain and sweep. He was witty and popular and showed us that surf lifesaving did not have to consist only of patrols and iron discipline. He injected a real element of fun into Club life. Until his arrival, swimming was the Club's main focus at surf carnivals, in which we achieved some success. He showed us that there were other facets of a surf club that members with various talents could enjoy. Eoin became Club captain in 1969-71. It was good to see him at the Club's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary reunion in 2010. I am sorry that he is no longer with us.

In the first couple of years, because the Club membership was so small, we had to do patrols every couple of weeks. Patrols could be rather dour affairs on cold Tassie days. At that time surfing in Tasmania had not become as popular among the general public as it is now and in bleak weather the beach was generally not well frequented.

As Club captain, I was usually at the beach every weekend from Spring to Autumn on either or both Saturday and Sunday. On Friday nights in the warmer months I played water polo. I was then living with my parents at Lindisfarne and later Sandy Bay as a Uni student. Each weekend morning, I would ride to the beach and each evening ride home again on my two-seater motor scooter (a Jawa Cezeta, the largest motor scooter in the world and, I am happy to say, popular with the girls). A couple of years later, I purchased my mother's Austin A30 from my earnings as a labourer at the Cascade brewery during Uni vacations, and this made trips to and from Park Beach more comfortable.

The arrival of our first clubhouse in about 1962 made things more comfortable for members. It looked like an old army barracks hut and was nicely located behind the

sand dunes in a sheltered area that was levelled to accommodate it. The clubhouse may have been obtained from the newly constructed Hobart Airport and reassembled. Members under the supervision of architect Esmond-Dorney (who owned the modernistic shack that still stands above where the clubhouse was), president Marc Ashton and a builder Dave Wright, mixed concrete and filled kerosene cans to form the piers. Marc Ashton had the keys to the clubhouse. Initially, Marc declined my request for a key, as I thought was my right as the new captain. Presumably he thought that I was too young to be entrusted with a key. I was taken aback and privately contemplated resigning as captain, but didn't. Eventually, he loosened up and gave keys to me and other office bearers. Later, Eoin McDonald and others often over nighted in the clubhouse.

We competed at all the surf life saving carnivals around Tasmania with a good measure of success. We looked forward to them. We sometimes slept in bunks at other clubhouses the night before a carnival on the north-west coast. I still have a phobia about sleeping in the top deck of a bunk due to the fact that I fell out of one while sleeping at the Burnie SLSC clubhouse the night before a surf carnival. I sprained an ankle rather badly, which made running in and out of the water in events next day rather painful.

In the early years Carlton and then Park Beach were the only surf life saving clubs in southern Tasmania. The Clifton club had not yet been formed. Most of the inter-club carnivals were on the north-west coast. Many of us had difficulty in travelling to them because we were young and did not have our own wheels. For the first couple of years I was usually dependent upon my parents driving me to and from the other end of Tasmania.

The R&R event was then regarded as the blue ribbon event at surf carnivals. I have several small black and white photos taken by my father around 1963 at (I think) Penguin Beach of the Park Beach R&R team competing and also of me competing in the belt race. The day looks bleak. One of the photos is of particular interest (and should be on the Club website) because it is a close-up of the R&R team in drill formation just before drawing the marbles and the members are easily identifiable: (L to R) Geoff Moffat, Brian Foley, Eoin McDonald, David Challis, Peter Biscoe and Jeff Morley. I still have the medal the Club awarded me as the best R & R man in 1963-64.

We trained solidly at the R&R. However, we never won the event at carnivals and harboured an unfounded suspicion that the judges, who all came from the older clubs, thought we should serve our time before they would acknowledge our ability. A supremely anti-climactic moment came at the State championships in about 1963. We had an excellent draw, well suited to our individual abilities and maximising our chances of winning. David Challis drew No 1 as the swimmer. I drew No 2 as the beltman. To the best of my imperfect recollection, the rest of the draw was as follows. Eoin McDonald drew No 3 as first linesman. Brian Foley drew No 4 as second linesman. Geoff Moffat drew No 5 as third linesman. Jeff Morley drew No 6 on the reel. We were first out to the buoys on the swim and belt legs. So it all came down to whether our drill was good enough. Afterwards, the announcement came over the loud speaker that we had won. We were jubilant. Perhaps two minutes later there was an announcement that an error had been made in counting the points, and that in fact another club had won. We were crestfallen. It was the only occasion that such an incident occurred in my years in any sport.

I have a large photograph of the 1961 state team about to board an Ansett plane at Hobart airport en route to the Australian championships at Moana Beach, South Australia. They were (as I wrote on the back in 1961): **Back** row: Noel Davies, Hobart Carlton (State observer); Peter Dixon, Penguin, (beach sprint); Dale Volprecht, Burnie (senior surf); Tony Ralph, Low Head (senior surf); Peter Biscoe, Park Beach (junior surf);



Ian Crawford, Burnie (junior belt); John Dunkley, Low Head (junior surf); ?? (orange boy??); Maurice Hardy, Burnie (board and ski) **Front row:** Robert Smith, Hobart Carlton (senior belt); "Binnie" Wilson, Ulverstone (coach and manager); "Brushback" Hill, Devonport (captain); Dennis Robertson, Hobart Carlton (senior surf). It would be worth putting this photo on the Club website.

An anecdote about respect for the power of the surf. I represented Tasmania at three Australian surf lifesaving championships: in Adelaide (Moana Beach) Perth (Cottelsloe Beach) and Sydney (Dee Why Beach). At the Sydney championships the Tasmanian team was staying at a hotel at Manly beach. Many club teams from around Australia were competing next day in the Australian inter club championship, which were held the day before the Australian inter-State championship. State reps competed for their clubs on the first day and their States on the second day. Before breakfast the day before the inter-club championship, I walked with some of the Tassie State team along Manly beach for a swim. We spoke briefly to a group from the Hobart Carlton club halfway down the beach, who were competing next day. One was John Anderson. He was aged about 16 or 17, a champion pool swimmer and a good bloke. I think his parents had a holiday shack in the Park Beach area. We continued our walk to the southern end of Manly beach. It was the biggest surf I had seen: too big for most on the beach. The only way you could get out was via a fast rip next to the rocks. When you caught one of the huge waves, which I did several times, it did not dump but sucked you under for 10 seconds or more (too long) while propelling you forward with tremendous power towards the beach. It was a big adrenalin rush but, looking back, it was foolhardy to have been out there. Afterwards we walked back along Manly beach en route to our hotel. We encountered some of the Hobart Carlton boys on the beach. Johnny Anderson had disappeared. His towel and t-shirt were still on the beach. His body was washed up a week later. The tragedy cast a shadow over the Australian championships. That day I learned a grim lesson in respecting the power of the surf.

The Club colours were flamingo, black and white. I was at a Club meeting in about 1962 when it was decided to adopt those colours. Unexpectedly, it caused resentment among a few members of Hobart Carlton SLSC because our flamingo was said to be too similar to the red in their club colours. In those days Carlton SLSC ran a successful disco in Hobart on Friday nights, which I often frequented. Often on the door was Robert Smith who may have been Hobart Carlton's secretary at the time; he was also a State representative in the senior belt. One night at the door he gave me the cold shoulder over our new colours. We sorted it out not by changing our colours but by using white as our dominant colour, thus distinguishing Hobart Carlton's dominant red colour.

The Club's emblem was a flamingo seahorse with a surf reel and line for its eye and spine. It is believed that the designer was Iain Duguid. I was at the same Club meeting in about 1962 when it was tabled and adopted. I thought then, and still think, that it is a terrific design.

The Club's first surf boat, acquired in about 1961 probably from Stanley SLSC, was called "Captain Bradley". She was an old clinker-built hulk, which surely was left over from the whaling days. She was a big, lumbering thing and we never raced her. Dunk, keen but with no experience, swept her on her maiden voyage at Park Beach, after putting her in the water for half an hour to expand the wood so she wouldn't leak. She was so heavy that one Saturday the boys gave up on dragging her back to the clubhouse after taking her out. Having better things to do, they left her on the beach overnight. Next morning she was sunk to her gunwales in the sand. Dunk confesses that they were too lazy to help dig her out, much to the ire of Eoin McDonald. She eventually became fuel for a bonfire. Later a moulded ply boat was acquired, perhaps from Devonport SLSC. We renamed her "Marc Ashton" after the Club president.

Although she had seen better days, at least we could race her. In the early years we only had one competition boat crew that trained as such, so that if one of them became unavailable any of us could be called on to fill the vacancy.

The Club had a Ladies Auxiliary for one season. One of the few surviving Club records that I have seen is the first and last annual report of the Ladies Auxiliary for 1962-1963. It was composed and signed by my mother as President. It is an intriguing historical document. It records that their first meeting was attended by "a large number of enthusiastic schoolgirls who were unable to attend subsequent meetings because of school work". It records that they raised money for the Club by the raffle of a hamper and in other ways, made and donated two resuscitation pillows and a pennant, repaired training costumes and paid for badges to be sewn on them, and donated a new surf line "which was urgently required". It notes that they entertained Club members and their partners at four parties. All went well at three of the parties at my home and the homes of Mrs Williams and Mrs Poole. The fourth party, held by Misses Sue Dare and Mandy Cruickshank, seems to have been a disaster for it was recorded that it "was gate crashed by a large number of outsiders and insufficient supper was brought". It is unclear if the supper was insufficient because there was not enough to feed the gatecrashers. I must have been there but have no recollection of gatecrashers or of hungering for more supper! Unhappily, the report concludes by recording the decision that "as we were getting little support from the members of the Club or their mothers, the Ladies Auxilliary could no longer function usefully. However, as individuals, we would be willing to give help as required".

The surviving members of Park Beach SLSC in its early years have grown old. However, through the prism of the years, we appreciate that it was due to our membership that we acquired a lifelong love of the surf, enduring friendships and fond memories of our youthful comrades on the beach.

Peter Biscoe

February 2015

### **Roast lamb by Gil Oakes.**

A member, who shall remain nameless was a butcher.

One night on his way to the surf club he 'accidentally' ran over a sheep.

He bundled it into his boot and drove on to the club.

Now he was partial to roast lamb and decided to prepare the animal for a sumptuous Sunday lunch for all.

The animal was set out for butchering on the club's kitchen table.

Suddenly, to his amazement, it awoke from the dead and crashed to the floor with legs in one direction and sheep marbles in the other and all over the floor.

Gathering his wits after such a shock he decided that dead men (or sheep) tell no tales and so dragged it outside into the sand hills and despatched it properly before resuming the task of preparing the Sunday roast.

With a freshly cleaned kitchen the members of the Park Beach club enjoyed a sumptuous Sunday roast lamb lunch.

There is another version of this story.

### **The sheep by John A Bird.**

We were getting a skin full in the tavern one Friday night, as we did, when we decided to have a barbecue the next day. Some one knocked off a sheep from a paddock on the way back to the club house. Of course we all crashed and slept where we lay only

to be woken by indignant yells from the sand hills from Chisel, I think, as the sheep that had escaped from the back of the ute, was devouring his sleeping bag from the bottom up. Poetic justice, I guess.

Wonder whatever happened to that sheep?

Then there was the time we had to outrun the ranger in the surf boat for nicking the mutton birds from the sanctuary, oops, better not tell Peter. What's the time limit on these infractions anyway?

## Reminiscences from Neil Coulston

### Wrestling at the Hobart City Hall – Park Beach SLSC

My job at Television TVT6 was running concerts and events at Hobart City Hall.

My predecessor was a good operator but not good with books and justifying the amounts of money. Quite unfairly he was doxxed into the police for embezzlement by a person who was the typical church going no sense of humour upright citizen. As it turned out he was just slack with his accountancy and did not benefit from the monies he could not explain. He spent some time in jail for his errors. So you can imagine the pressure on cash flows and accounting for same when I took over the job. We had suspected for some time that the union members, that the City Hall insisted on us using, were less than honest. The country American singer Hank Snow came to Hobart and he was a legend who sold out in no time and in fact we were selling standing room only. The city hall sat 1800 people for concerts so we knew how much money was due and when we tried to account of everything there was a substantial amount missing and it was all cash sales at the hall including standing room. I had been told there was a kitchen under the stage of city hall but had not had any reason to find it. We noticed that before the main act most of the union front of house staff were missing. We went to the pub over the road where they usually drank then found them in the kitchen where we caught them red handed dividing up our cash. They threatened to close us down if we acted on what we had uncovered.

I guaranteed the promoter his money and then demanded the union pay TVT6 back. They refused. The Hank Snow concert was Monday night and the next event we had was the Wrestling on Friday night. The wrestling at this time was huge and mostly door sales in cash. The reserved seats were always taken and you did not dare sell the regulars' seats. I refused to work with the Unions. On Wednesday night, drinking with Macca at the Lewisham pub, we realised the the members of Park Beach SLSC had experience with front of house when they ran the dance parties at San Carlo Hall. So we did a deal that TVT would pay the Surf Club for ticket sales, seating arrangements, security and the setting up of the ring etc. The ring had a bouncing floor to enhance the wrestlers' antics. It worked really well and the club members enjoyed the jobs and got involved in the promotion and audience. The arrangement lasted for some time but we had to give into the unions for the concerts but managed to keep the wrestling for the Surf club. Peter Sharp was the commentator and we were the only people that knew what the arrangements were. Sharpie had to be beaten up in the ring one night by The Mouse. All staged of course and I would often be called on to promise a rematch for a bad loser.

The biggest crowds were the nights we had the midgets and they were fantastic entertainers. One night we had 6 of them in the cage of death.

A funny night but what was even funnier was the fact I had to get them on the 9.30pm flight out of Hobart so they could be in Melbourne in time for the production of snow white and the seven dwarfs which started rehearsals the next morning. They were fantastic people and so easy to work with.

The Wrestlers they had a protocol in that the goodies stayed at Wrest Point and the baddies at Hadleys. It was important to have them in separate cars and they were not seen to fraternise with each other. One night two of the biggest wrestlers were having a shower back stage at City hall and I went back to take the goody to Wrest Point. I walked into the shower room and here they are having a "Gay" spat and swearing at each other. I called out "car" and the goody stormed out of the showers wringing wet and hopped in the car. He stormed out of the car at Wrest Point in track suit and no shoes which had to be sorted with Wrest Point security.

Macca and Morls used to set up the ring. I remember Cliff Wright doing tickets. The boat crew were security. It was a great arrangement until the unions finally demanded to take over again. The original Union heads all resigned and a new younger mob slowly took over.

### **The Park Beach fishing trip on the Cartela By Brian Dunkin**

In the early 1970s it was not unusual for surf boat crews and ski paddlers to take their fishing lines when they went for a row or a paddle. There was always a flathead to catch near Whale Rock, or Speck Island, or somewhere in between.

About the same time the surf club fund-raising committee, or a certain member of it who shall remain nameless, decided to organise a fishing trip. It seemed everyone liked fishing and the event would be successful.

In Hobart, the Cartela ferry advertised it was available for hire for fishing trips, parties, and other activities on the Derwent. So the committee approached the owners of the Cartela about hiring the vessel for a fishing trip. The owners of the Cartela were most obliging. And so they organised an all-day Saturday charter in three weeks.

As the day approached the the committee contacted members of Park Beach to advertise the event and attract interest; everything seemed to be going well.

The sun shone brightly, the weather was good, and everything looks set for a successful day. When the organisers arrived at the wharf, the Cartela was ready. The crew had the engine running and were ready to go.

Unfortunately only about 12 punters turned up, including the organisers. In their infinite wisdom, the committee decided, "Bugger it. Let's go." So at 9 a.m. on a bright Saturday morning, the Cartela left the dock and sailed south down the Derwent River.

The 12 punters carried their fishing rods, lines, eskies of beer and food. They made a start on the beers as the Cartela chugged past Battery Point.

In less than an hour the Cartela slowed down and stopped off the cliffs near Taroona. The punters baited their hooks and started fishing.

After an hour, and with no fish in the bucket, the organiser approached the captain of the Cartela and politely suggested there were no fish in this area and they should move to another. Reluctantly, the captain complied and 45 minutes later the Cartela sailed near the Iron Pot, a known fishing hole.

Drifting in the lee of the small lighthouse, the punters applied fresh bait, cast their hooks into the water, and immediately started catching rock cod, and the various other species of inedible fish that swim in the area.

Shortly before noon a northerly breeze started blowing. Within an hour it was a howling gale. Spray was flying off the whitecaps as the Cartela started drifting towards the South Pole.

Unconcerned, the captain suggested it might be time to return to port. The punters agreed and the captain started the engine, or at least tried to start the engine.

After about an hour with the engine still quiet, and the Cartela now drifting further south at a rate of knots, the captain ordered the crew to drop anchor. The main propeller shaft of the Cartela had snapped and there was no propulsion. They were doomed.

Half pickled, the punters made several jokes before suggesting that they could help. Most of them were seasoned surf boat crew members so the simplest solution was for them to row one of the lifeboats ashore and call for help. And so they did.

The crew lowered the lifeboat over the side of the Cartela while the rowers made ready for the voyage ashore. When the lifeboat hit the water, it was obvious there were several bad leaks so the punters volunteered one of their smaller members to bail the lifeboat as the other punters rowed. Hopefully they would reach land before they reached the bottom of the sea.

Armed with a phone number and a bailing bucket, the fearless bunch took off and rowed northwards towards land; four of them rowing and one bailing. It took an hour and a half to reach land and another half an hour to walk towards Sandford and find a telephone.

Meanwhile on board the Cartela, the punters became restless and hungry. Having drunk all their beer and eaten all their food, including what the rowers left behind, the punters looked for alternatives. Fortunately the Cartela had a tuck shop with the chocolates and other goodies.

Night came. The wind eased. The rowers returned from shore and the crew took the lifeboat back aboard. Much mirth and discussion proceeded. As the sun went down behind the mountains, the punters sighted a tug sailing southward towards them.

Help arrived. The tug crew took the Cartela in tow and at about 10 p.m. deposited the stricken boat and the tired punters back at the wharf. A crowd of revellers were on the wharf, not to meet the returning but waiting to go out on an evening cruise. They were not happy to see the punters come ashore looking tired and inebriated.

Several weeks later the owner of the Cartela contacted the organiser, who shall still remain nameless, and asked for payment. The organiser politely refused to pay on the grounds that the Cartela did not meet its obligation and in fact put the punters at considerable risk and inconvenience. When challenged and threatened, the organiser wrote to Doug Plaister, who was then head of the water safety board and later Lord Mayor of Hobart, outlining the situation. He sent a copy of the letter to the Cartela owner, again refusing to pay.

And so the bill went away. The surf club raised no funds but the punters had a free and interesting day that most, who are still alive, remember to this day. And that's the story of the Park Beach fishing trip on the Cartela.



### The 50<sup>th</sup> reunion by Eoin McDonald

Following the 50<sup>th</sup> Park Beach reunion in 2011 one of the stalwarts, Eoin S McDonald (Macca & Banjo) penned this ditty. It shows how fondly Park Beach members recalled their adventures together.

Park Beachers all came out to play,  
 on that cool but sunny day  
 There were drinks at the Crescent  
 And waves at the beach  
 That made our breath hard to reach.  
 Out to the buoy for ol' times sake  
 Bowline, Col, Dunk and Mac,  
 Butch, Giblet and thinking back,  
 fair dinkum, also Sarg and Cruisy  
 and Marg and Dawsy  
 and the beach patrol looking on  
 Wiggy, Griffio, Pedro, Komo and Bob Watson.  
 From the ol' to the new  
 And the clubhouse of the Carlton Park crew  
 Old time friends to renew  
 Peter B and Dunk in water too.  
 Muff and Greg's steak an easy chew  
 as the sun shone  
 and Cliff 's trombone blew.  
 He sang of a tatooed lady  
 The chorus was shared and lyrics shady.  
 In the beach corner at Sandy Bay  
 Twenty five gathered for the final day  
 A last sip and quiet say  
 At benches comfortable they spent the day  
 A last joke and embrace  
 while watching the  
 procession of Sail  
 pass the place  
 and in case  
 we'd forgotten her face  
 last in line was our favourite fishing sheila,  
 THE M V CARTELA!

### **The clown's head by Ian Mo Mulholland**

The Park Beach team was in Burnie for a surf carnival at Christmas time in the early 1960s. The street parade was over and we had one of the clown heads used in the parade.

Mo, who thrived on an audience, remembers wearing this large paper mache head, you looked through the nose, it had long blonde type hair.

Anyway Mo was on the Burnie beach early in the morning mucking around shoving his finger up the nose and in the ear and getting plenty of laughs from his mates. Then from behind someone set the hair alight. ALL very funny as Mo thought everybody was laughing at his antics, until his head started to get warmer and smell of smoke.

He never did have a photo.

### **Reminiscences of Geoff Moffat.**

These are some of my memories of my time at Park.

I joined the club after seeing the notice for the AGM in the Mercury in 1962. The meeting was at Griff's office in Murray Street; Iain Duguid was Secretary and Mark Ashton, President. Later I replaced Ian as Secretary on his transfer interstate.

I was warmly welcomed into the club and joined Daffles, Jeff Morley, Pete Biscoe, Mo Mulholland and Eoin McDonald in the R&R team.

The temperature of the water at Park Beach was not as welcoming and on my first club swim there I not only turned blue but also thought that my voice would never return to baritone again.

Around that time, we christened the "Marc Ashton".

Having taken for granted the modern facilities at North Cronulla it was great to see Park not only operating out of that clubhouse at the time but also the effort that all put into improving and extending it.

We spent one afternoon digging a deep well only to find we had to refill to stop the public from drowning. The outside ablutions of course had a character of their own.

We attended many interclub carnivals with varying success but achieved second place at the State Champion ships at Low Head in the 62/63 season. How lucky were we to have great swimmers like Pete, Jeff and Dave Challis.

It was not however all about competition at these carnivals all the time. Much of the fun was on the way to them, after them and on the journey home.

On the way to Burnie, our "Surfin Safari" Holdens boiled when we showed off our Park tracksuits by laying them over the radiators.

At Burnie we took part in a street parade and I think it was one (or both) of the Cruise boys joined in wearing a monkey suit.

On the way back from Devonport and Penguin for some reason we had to spend overnight in Murray Bennett's little car somewhere along the Midland Highway.

Fund raising as always presented a problem. To the rescue came Cliff Wright. Cliff, a talented trombonist put together a jazz band and set up the "Surfer's Dance" at the San Carlo hall on Friday nights.

Initially we did well with this and Cliff in entrepreneurial style recruited the "Red Onions" jazz band from Melbourne for some shows at San Carlo and on the beach at Park to enhance the program.

We worked hard on the dance for some time after the "Red Onions" visit but struck trouble when the Truth Newspaper printed a fictitious story about a riot at the dance between "Surfies" and "Rockers". Truth was trying to capitalise on the perceived so-called conflict between these groups. Nothing of the sort happened at our dance. After threatening legal action, we settled out of court for a new surfboat.

Varied things occurred around the club and in the city generally. At Christmas lunch in 62 someone set fire to the pudding, we decorated the club with cut-outs from cereal boxes and rowed the boat out to one of the off shore features to look for mutton bird nests.

Someone bought an old car to the beach. It broke down so it was pushed off the bluff.

From time to time we sang along on Saturday night at the Lewisham Hotel and on paydays at the Imperial in Hobart.

We had a dinner with Carlton. Guests included Bob Newbiggin and Bill Furey, 2 surf lifesaving legends of the 1930s and 40s.

Along the way, we conflicted with the authorities for running an unapproved surf carnival and allowing our boat crew to row from Hobart down the Derwent to Park Beach.

On the Australian Championship front, eleven of us took the Princess of Tasmania to Melbourne in 1963 then hitch hiked to Warrnambool. It was the first time Park had gone to Aussie Titles. It was freezing cold. I'm not sure where we slept.

In 1964 Matthew, Tommy, Daffles and I travelled to Collaroy for the Aussie Titles to meet the other Park boys in Sydney. A family invited us four to breakfast. Lifesavers once rescued the father. They wanted to express their appreciation to lifesavers generally.

All the team competed in just about everything that didn't have a craft but returned without any medals.

After that I returned to NSW but tried to keep track of Park over the years. When I heard it had amalgamated with Carlton I made an effort to find out more at Clifton at the Australian Championships in 1983. I bought a t-shirt with the Carlton Park logo on the front and the Lewisham Tavern on the back. Enquiries however of the whereabouts those of you I knew in 1962/64 fell fallow.

In 1984 I took my teenage children to Tasmania to show them the historic places of their Dad's youth, but a visit to Park showed nothing more than vacant land.

That's about it. There is no doubt much more than the above to recall about Park by sharper minds than I have, but regardless of what I have forgotten, I had a great time being a member.

It is sad to see how many of those though have gone to the big surf in the sky; time sure takes its toll.

All the best

Geoff (Moffo) Moffat Adelaide 3/3/15

### **Bronze medallion training by Gil Oakes.**

I had been a good junior cricket bowler and an average school footballer. However the step to adult level in these sports was difficult for me being of only average height and build. When my back decided that bowling was no longer an option my interest turned to other sports.

The surf had always been a favourite but I had never considered it as a sport.

When the Australian surf lifesaving championships were held in Tasmania for the first time I considered joining a club.

Never having trained as a swimmer I was starting on the back foot.

We were swimming at Park Beach when Rex Wright invited my friend Graeme Williams and me to join.

Learning of the requirements I decided to get going in the pool and meet the qualifying swimming time. Gradual improvement got me to the basic standard so I was ready to do my bronze medallion.

Iain Duguid, the club secretary, was the instructor and for several weeks in 1962 we worked as a squad of six. Training comprised artificial resuscitation, first aid, theory and most importantly "reel line and belt" drill, over and over again. The reel line and belt were a key part of the rescue procedures in those days. Each trainee learned the different roles of each member of the belt team by repetition, first on land and then on the beach. Each member had to swim as beltman and then as patient.

Our squad trained on the lawns surrounding the Hobart swimming pool two nights each week and at Park Beach at weekends.

At last the exam day approached and I remember being very apprehensive due to my concerns about my swimming. Ian Duguid put his foot down firmly and I was reminded that five others depended on me as the sixth squad member.

Having been guided through this problem to my great relief the squad was examined and passed at Park Beach. Like many bronze medallion exams in Tasmania the cold water and wind were major challenges.

It was the beginning of the most challenging and rewarding part of my sporting career. It was a young club so the members were quickly co-opted into responsible rolls. It wasn't long before we attended state centre meetings and took on such club rolls as captain, treasurer, secretary, instructor and committee members.

We were challenged in many ways and grew accordingly.

### **The secret crayfish cave by Cliff Wright**

Cliff was an avid snorkel diver and knew the waters around Spectacle Head like the back of his hand. One day a new member from Queensland suggested that it would be good to have crayfish on the menu that night. Keen to show the newcomer how prolific the Park Beach seafood was he quietly donned his mask and snorkel and disappeared around the rocks. Some time later the same person was on the beach and was astounded to see Cliff emerge from the water with two huge crays.

It was suspected that Cliff knew of an underwater cave under Spectacle Head which provided him with crayfish whenever required but no one else ever found it.

### **Denis Franklin's car by Eoin McDonald**

(When Eoin refers to the bluff he means Spectacle Head which in those days was uninhabited)

One of our members, Denis Franklin, brought this old car down from Hobart and stored it in our boat shed so he could repair it.

After about three months I said 'look that car's gotta go. We've got no storage'

'Well what am I gonna do with it?' replied Dennis.

'Take it up the bluff and shove the bloody thing off!'

Next thing he's organised the van so up the bluff we take it.

Down goes the car, not the best interests of the environmental people, amidst raucous laughter, into the drink!

We awoke next morning, walked down to the beach – well there there was the spare wheel up there, a seat over there, the whole beach was like a battlefield.

Anyway we cleaned that up and that was the end of it, the end of Denis Franklin's car.

### Ode to a surf lifesaver by Jeff Morley 2007

It happened as a need in 1907 Surf Life Saving was born at Bondi Beach, 100 years ago

I joined as a junior and stood proudly along side my heroes, the men, women, boys and girls of one hundred years of Vigilance and Service. We fought hard for our bronze medallions, carried out at military precision and after months of training. The examiner stood ramrod straight, dressed immaculately in the SLSA Blue Diamond blazer issuing orders down wind of the six shivering souls supporting the reel, line and belt. Success!!!! We are all through. We are Life Savers

I was a Surf Life Saver

I spent my days patrolling between those red and yellow flags with other fit. young Aussie youth all keeping an eye on the waves, ready for action. The weathered patrol captain with 20 years on the job whispered to me "keep a watch on those two near the rip" and within minutes there was trouble----- Patrol action,-----team work,----- two lucky people,---- pack up,-----another day at the beach

I was a Surf Life Saver

I trained for my belt races, pounding through the shore break----sprinting to the cans-----towing that drum of water up and down the river-----pulling lumps of foam up and down the pool. The states here we are---Bang----we are away, belt crew and beltman----rush---lift---yell---urging---down. Linesmen working hard with urgency. We have to be better. Beltman looks across the field and see a few swimming already--- whoooooosh—the big wave hits. I am under--- holding--- pushing always forward towards my goal---the cans or a patient All the same. Swim hard, touch the can, looks along ---- third--- back to training---Aussies three weeks away

I was a Surf Life Saver

Into the boats for a bit of fun. I look back rowing the old wooden double enders at the club. But we now have these fancy lightweight boats and serious---- "In"-- yells the sweep---"pull!!!! ---- give me ten, go go", his eyes are wide and glazed at the approaching surf, Why???? Up,up,up,and over, my bowman's backside thumps back on the seat. Row -pull—pumps working as water pours in. Round the cans, watch for the ride to the finish. "Go for it" I hear---muscles aching---short breaths --- energy needed---legs in pain. "All to the back". Yeh Joy!!!! We are over, first place, first heat.

I was a Surf Life Saver

Well the days of patrolling and competition have come to an end so into the whites, study the rules, set the courses. You're now the official. Across the line they come 1—2 —3—4 "Yes mate 3<sup>rd</sup> not 2<sup>nd</sup>." The paddler throws down his board in disgust. Ah Well there's always tomorrow. A few beers at the debrief after and reminisce how much bigger the surf used to be--- how heavy the craft where---- how fitter we were---how many rescues we carried out and we still do it for love and the soggy bread roll we had for lunch 30 years ago is with us today

I was a Surf Life Saver

Down to the club—sand's hotter---harder to walk in--- keep a close watch on the paces around the peg--- No go and do it again. R & R precision---"Hey coach come and watch my ski starts"—Analytical look—try this ---try that "yeh feels good coach" Final talk to the nippers—states next week up to the kids now I have done all I can.---- 4<sup>th</sup> club in the states—work to be done before the Aussies

I was a Surf Life Saver

On the way through club land hold various committee positions. Miss the annual meeting-----Gear Steward. "Thanks for the nomination maate." I have a run for the States—Deputy Pres.----easy--- Then the Pres retires—now I am in the seat (Ah Well)—committees-phone hook ups—circulars—regulations—courses—sponsors---flying. Reminds me of the days of Gear Steward---Pick up a couple of citations on the way--- put them alongside the medals of 20 years past --more dusting

I was a Surf Life Saver

Mates come and mates go as we reach the dinosaur years but the family of Surf Life Saving lives on -strong---good for another ton In the grey nomads stage of life as you set off ----"what are you going to do what about the grandkids" "Mate I have 336 clubs out there to have a beer at". "Another beer mate?" "yeh thanks what about the big one in 64 and that swim of the century at Clifton beach."----"Mate you better stay for the local nippers carnival next week. Got your whites? Yeh park the van there and hook the power on" Wife was always surprised how we managed to end up at a surf carnival somewhere. "Planning dear planning"

I was a Surf Life Saver

Forty-seven years involvement -don't know if I'll make the fifty. If the chemo keeps working there's always a chance and it is a goal to achieve. Been a great life I could never give back what the Surf Life Saving family has given me over a life time

I WAS A SURF LIFE SAVER

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